

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A sliding element for providing a seal against a fluid between sliding faces of a pair of relatively slidable components, one of said components being a stationary sliding element and the other of said components being a rotary sliding element, said fluid being located in either inner circumferential side or outer circumferential side of said sliding faces, said sliding element comprising:

a) dimples being disposed on at least one sliding face of said sliding faces and being inclined towards a rotary direction when viewed facing said fluid along a radial direction and being made longitudinally long along the inclination;

b) a plurality of dimple sections having annular forms of different radii and being disposed on said sliding face and having said dimples being arranged along said annular forms; and

c) a plurality of dam sections having annular forms and being disposed between said dimple sections,

wherein each of said dimples has a long rectangular shape extending along an inclination direction thereof, and adjoining dimples arranged along the inclination direction between adjoining dimple sections are divided by one of the annular-shaped dam sections.

2. (Original) The sliding element as in claim 1 wherein said dimples of said dimple sections line up along a circular arc and a groove width of said dimples gradually increases towards said fluid side.

3. (Original) The sliding element as in claim 1 wherein a groove end of said dimples of said dimple sections is open towards said fluid side.

4. (Original) The sliding element as in claim 1 wherein at least a first dam section is disposed on a circumferential edge portion of said sliding face which is located on the opposite side of said fluid side.

5. (Original) The sliding element as in claim 1 wherein a width of said dam sections in a radial direction is made smaller than a longitudinal length of said dimples.

6. (New) The sliding element as in claim 1, further comprising a plurality of single tier grooves having a form of a circular arc, and being inclined relative to an outer circumference of at least one of the plurality of dam sections.

7. (New) The sliding element as in claim 6, wherein the plurality of single tier grooves comprise a form selected from the group consisting of a spiral curve, a straight line, an S-shaped curve and houndstooth.

8. (New) The sliding element as in claim 1, wherein a groove width of said dimples is uniform at both the inner circumferential side and the outer circumferential side of the sliding faces.